

UNIVERSITY OF TARTU  
COLLEGE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

**USING GAMES TO DEVELOP SPEAKING SKILLS  
IN UPPER-SECONDARY EDUCATION**

MA Thesis

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## **ABSTRACT**

Speaking is one of the most important skills and most difficult one to teach in traditional foreign language classroom settings. The main causes for it seem to be teacher-centred lessons and insufficient speaking practice, along with speaking anxiety. The communicative approach and language games have been introduced by language teaching specialists as one of the alleviations to the biggest problems. Most games found online and in language teaching books are intended to be used with younger students and are not challenging enough for older students. Is the effect of language games different in upper-secondary education or are language games as beneficial for older students?

The main aim of this MA thesis is to collect information about different problems that occur while students are developing their English-speaking skills and to investigate the effect of using games to teach English in upper-secondary education. The research questions are: what are the problems that students have when they are developing their English-speaking skill? What are the most beneficial aspects of using games in language classrooms according to the language learning group under study? What kind of games do they prefer?

As a result of the study process a collection of 15 games was compiled to develop speaking skills in upper-secondary education. The games were tested with a study group of 14 students aged 16 - 19. Their evaluation of the study process was collected and analyzed.

Chapter one focuses on the previous studies related to teaching speaking skills and using games in language classrooms. Chapter two presents the information gathered during the study process and the analysis of the data. The appendixes include the collection of games and the used questionnaires as well as the suggestions for adaptations.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	2
INTRODUCTION .....	4
CHAPTER 1 .....	6
1.1 The Estonian context.....	6
1.2 Foreign Language Anxiety .....	8
1.3 The context of a speaking assignment.....	11
1.4 Waldorf Education and language teaching in Waldorf schools.....	13
1.5 What are language games and gamification? .....	15
1.6 The positive effects of using games and gamification .....	17
1.7 The possible difficulties of using games and gamification .....	19
CHAPTER 2 .....	21
2.1 The study group and the first questionnaire .....	21
2.2 The second questionnaire .....	24
2.3 Compiling the collection of games .....	30
2.4 Integrating games to English lessons .....	33
CONCLUSION .....	36
REFERENCES.....	39
APPENDICES .....	43
Appendix 1. A Collection of Games Suitable for Developing Speaking Skills in Upper-Secondary Education	
Appendix 2. Recommendations for adaptations	
Appendix 3. The first questionnaire	
Appendix 4. The second questionnaire	
RESÜMEE .....	74

## INTRODUCTION

Learning and teaching the speaking skill is one of the most complex tasks in language education. The main reason for it is that speaking is a multifaceted competence that demands proficiency in social issues, discourse, spontaneity and quick thinking. There are no resources to rely on except one's own mind. The study process of a successful foreign language speaking skill is therefore demanding and presents many challenges for both parties – teachers and students.

Nunan (1995) and Ur (1991) both conclude that speaking is not only the most difficult but also the most important aspect of learning a second or foreign language when compared with all the four language skills because individuals who learn a language are referred to as the speakers of that language and learner's success is measured based on his/her ability to perform a conversation in the language.

The main aim of this MA thesis is to collect information about different problems that occur while students are developing their English-speaking skill and to investigate the effect of using games to teach English in upper-secondary education to the chosen study group. To reach the aim, a collection of games that can be used in secondary education English as a foreign language lessons to improve students' speaking skills was developed and tested with the study group.

The research questions that arose during the study process are: what are the problems that students have when they are developing their English-speaking skill? What are the most beneficial aspects of using games in language classrooms according to the language learning group under study? What kind of games do they prefer?

In order to find answers to these research questions, the author compiled two questionnaires, a collection of games suitable for developing speaking skills in upper-secondary education and followed the recommendations gathered during composing the literature review.

The games were carried out in several speaking lessons from September 2019 until March 2020 in a small Waldorf Educational school in Viljandi with a composite class of 14 students aged 16-19, and conclusions were made based on the students' own reflections of their study process.

To clarify some of the main concepts used in this MA thesis, four definitions are explained. First, differences between tasks and activities are explained. Tasks create opportunities for meaning-focused language use and activities are more form-focused to practice language items (Willis, 1996). Games are also meaning-focused but additionally include an element of fun and challenge (Ur, 2016). Haldfield (1999) adds that, besides an element of fun, a game should have rules and a goal. To fit into the given timeframe and topic, teachers are often required to adapt the game and use gamification instead, which means using only some elements of the game in the classroom. This paper aims to discuss the benefits of both: language games and gamification, therefore no further distinctions between the two are made.

The following chapter gives an overview of the Estonian educational context, outlines some of the most prevailing problems that occur in foreign language speaking lessons, introduces the Waldorf educational ideas, explains language games and gamification and views the positive sides as well as the difficulties of using games and gamification in foreign language lessons.

The second chapter describes the study that was carried out among the language learning group, describes and analyses the results and gives information about the collection of games compiled and used during the study process. Appendixes include the collection of games, recommendations for adaptations and the questionnaires used.

# CHAPTER 1

## 1.1 The Estonian context

In Estonia, English is the most popular foreign language to study (Estonian Ministry of Education, 2015). Learning English as a foreign language can be divided into three stages: pre-school, basic and upper-secondary education. Basic education includes 3 stages: stage I – grades 1-3; stage II – grades 4-6; stage III – grades 7-9. Upper-secondary education includes grades 10 - 12. According to the national curriculum for upper-secondary schools, students can choose to enrol in different language courses according to their language levels (B1 and B2). By the time of graduation, pupils should have achieved the level of an independent user (the B- level according the Common European Framework) in at least two foreign languages (National Curriculum for Upper-Secondary Schools, 2014). Although English is mostly taught as the primary foreign language in Estonian schools and the students should reach B2 language level by the end of gymnasium, the results of National Examinations in English of 2018 show that approximately 11 % of students have not been able to achieve the B1 level of English by that time (Kriisa, 2018).

On their homepage, the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research maintains that upper-secondary schools are to help students become creative, multi-talented, socially mature and reliable citizens who have discovered a field of endeavour that is best suited to their individual interests and capacities for continuing their future educational path (Ministry of Education and Research, 2015a). In order to achieve these goals Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020 establishes five general goals. One of them – to change the teachers' approach to learning – states that it is necessary to implement an approach to learning that supports each learner's individual and social development, the acquisition of learning skills, creativity and entrepreneurship at all levels and in all types of education (Ministry of Education and Research, 2015b).

Based on the National Curriculum of foreign languages, the study process should be based on the communicative approach and student-centred methods. The importance of using the target language in a broad variety of activities, including pair and group assignments, is emphasised. Teachers are encouraged to develop students' communicative skills and ability to perform in the target language.

Two studies (Kongi, 2015; Niinimäki, 2017) carried out in Estonian schools have shown a lack of success in the full implementation of previously mentioned educational values, especially in foreign language learning. The main problems are domination of teacher-centred lessons and using obsolescent language learning approaches. Teachers are aware of the positive effects of using games in lessons, but Gabla's (2014) finds that games are mostly used with younger students from first grade to sixth and very rarely with students in older grades.

Niinimäki (2017) observed several English lessons in upper-secondary schools in Ida-Virumaa. She learned that most lessons in grades 10-11 have the primary focus on the preparation for the state exam and teachers employ very few communication exercises. Many students have difficulties with speaking English and one of the main reasons for it might be the fear of speaking.

The same tendency has been observed in Kongi's (2015) MA thesis, that was carried out among 51 adult English learners in Tallinn University Rakvere College. The participants noted that their current English classes are stressful, expressed their negative memories associated with childhood language learning experiences and agreed that they did not have many opportunities to speak in foreign language lessons. Most of the recipients specified facing stressful moments when expected to speak English. They listed some of their biggest fears: performing in front of people they did not know well, starting or continuing a conversation, giving a speech in public, participating in a job interview or being in the centre of attention.

The situation in Estonian schools is not uniform, Sibul (2018) observed foreign language lessons in Tartu Waldorf gymnasium and reported that students there have good oral skills and teachers in this alternative educational school teach mainly according to the principles of communicative approach. Their teaching techniques and methods originate from the Waldorf educational view on language development.

For English as a foreign language (EFL) learners, the speaking skill seems to be one of the most important sub-skills to develop, but at the same it is the most difficult one to achieve in a traditional classroom context. Traditional methods, such as the audio-lingual and grammar-translation methods of teaching English, often include teacher-centred lessons and consider students as passive receivers. Although this way of teaching may seem antiquated, it is still commonly practiced. Prabhu (1987) sees this tendency as a relic from the past, “Those teachers who were taught by traditional methods tend to continue teaching with similar methods. Teachers tend to teach the way they were taught.”

In Estonian educational system, students mostly learn English as the first foreign language. They usually spend 8-13 years on the subject. Most of the upper-secondary students take the English state exams and their aim is to reach B-2 level of English. Unfortunately, not everyone reaches the goal. There are several reasons for the backwardness of some students. The following section gives a short overview of some of the most discussed problems in oral language teaching studies.

## **1.2 Foreign language anxiety**

Teachers may discover several problems when they teach students foreign language speaking skill in the classroom. One of the most frequently mentioned problem is foreign language anxiety (Cheng, et al, 1999; Horwitz et al, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989).



Anxious students in a foreign language class have difficulties concentrating and grasping the content of the target language. They also become forgetful, sweat and have palpitations. Most of all, they fear speaking in a language class because they try to avoid making mistakes and being laughed at, being negatively evaluated and not being understood (Horwitz et al, 1986).

In general, anxiety is defined as distress or uneasiness of the mind caused by fear of danger or misfortune. Horwitz et al (1986) define foreign language anxiety as a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process. Piechurska-Kuciel (2011) stresses the unfavourable aspect of language anxiety and defines the concept as a negative emotion specific to the foreign language learning process, which in turn significantly obstructs the development of the speaking skill.

Difficulties in speaking in class largely depend on the individual characteristics of the student (Horwitz et al, 1986; Murugavel, 2003). But there are several other reasons emerging from the study environment that can trigger the feeling of anxiety in classroom context. Horwitz et al (1986) stress that speaking in a foreign language class where students have little control of the communicative situation and their performance is constantly monitored causes more stress and anxiety than in any other real-life speaking occasion.

The situation worsens when the element of evaluation is added. According to Horwitz et al (1986) oral tests have the potential of provoking both test and oral communication anxiety simultaneously in susceptible students. The student's inability to perform leads to inaccurate assessment and causes even more anxiety in the student, which in turn could lead to a closed circle of the student's backwardness and negative associations with foreign language learning.

Students appear to be acutely sensitive to target language corrections and generally to fear of being evaluated. Numerous studies (Cheng et al, 1999; Horwitz et al, 1986; Murugavel,

2003; Piechurska-Kuciel; 2007) outline this tendency. To help students with this type of anxiety, Horwitz et al (1986) suggest that teachers and peers should avoid constantly inspecting the learner's oral performance because it can worsen the situation and provoke strong feelings of communication avoidance. They also stress the importance of monitoring the classroom climate to identify specific sources of student anxiety and the usage of positive error correction techniques, where necessary mistakes are pointed out, but the experience is kept positive for the learner.

Among the age group in focus – the adolescents, students aged 16-19, the social context is also one of the primary enhancers influencing language anxiety. A competitive classroom atmosphere, difficult interactions with teachers and the risk of embarrassment may all be the reasons for students' reluctance to speak in the foreign language classroom

To solve the problem, the authors suggest that error correction techniques should be based on instructional philosophy and on reducing defensive reactions in students. Researches (Horwitz et al, 1986; Piechurska-Kuciel, 2007; Murugavel, 2003) propose that a friendly and supportive teacher, who can lower students' foreign language anxiety and turn the classroom into a safe and non-stressful environment, is one of the solutions to expand students' speaking skills.

The three recommendations for foreign language teachers on how to resolve students' negative emotions in the classroom context are firstly, by having a supportive and friendly attitude towards the students; secondly, by lowering the frequency and importance of evaluation while using positive error correction techniques; thirdly, by eliminating the risk of embarrassment with constantly monitoring students and making efforts to improve the overall classroom climate.

### 1.3 The context of speaking assignments

The teacher's first task is to acknowledge the existence of foreign language anxiety and the second task is to create a supportive classroom environment, where students feel safe to make mistakes. The tasks that the language teacher chooses to improve students' speaking skills are the second most cited factor in determining the success in getting students to speak more and better in foreign language classes. Instead of reciting memorized dialogues or concentrating on the grammar pattern practise, using games, role plays and student-oriented activities in pairs and small groups has gained acceptance and are now widely recommended. The tasks should allow students to focus on the meaning as opposed to formal features.

Qutob (2018) investigated the correlation between 10<sup>th</sup> grade students' satisfaction with acquired speaking skills in relation to the material and teacher. She suggests that in order to improve students' speaking skills in secondary education, students need to have high satisfaction levels with both, the teacher's quality and the material used in the classroom.

In order to alleviate the student's negative self-perceptions caused by the inability to understand others and make ones understood, language experience should be introduced in a low-anxiety learning environment. One way to reduce anxiety is to use cooperative games in foreign language classrooms. Piechurska-Kuciel (2011) suggests that cooperative learning should be used to create opportunities for students to know their peers better, enable them to feel less stressed in their presence and count on one another's help. This is not always an easy goal to achieve in lessons. Murugavel (2003) advises that during cooperative tasks it is the teacher's mission to make all possible efforts to ensure that the class proceeds effectively and that all students are treated as equal members of the class.

Cooperative tasks are not only helpful for reducing language anxiety but also have a great educational value. Jacobs (2019) discusses the effectiveness of using cooperative games and claims that students learn more when they work cooperatively with classmates, than when they

work competitively or individually. During games, competition encourages some students, but at the same time it is important to notice students that get demotivated by the competitive situation. But as a vital life skill, practising cooperation is beneficial to everyone.

Working together is beneficial, but the content of the work is also relevant. Farmer & Sweeney (1997), Savignon (1972) and Piechurska-Kuciel (2011) emphasise that students should have more opportunities for genuine spoken communication in English. They also stress the vital role of spontaneous conversational interactions in the development of communicative competence. Games offer various opportunities in classroom for genuine spoken communication, as it is emphasized by Kim (1995) games create a meaningful context for language use.

In real life situations students might need English for more than only for spontaneous conversations. Crowther et al (2015) emphasize the importance of using authentic tasks that resemble different real-life situations. The authors stress the importance of performing in front of other students and suggest using diverse speaking activities in a variety of contexts, and particularly those where students are asked to speak in front of the others.

Celce-Murcia (2007) adds that learning activities when they are richly situated, fully meaningful and contextualized can give students excellent understanding of grammar. She believes that the efficiency is much greater than when using any grammatical sentence-drill. A well-chosen subject matter of language lessons is the root of raising student motivation and it is best done with tasks that have a goal to achieve or a mission to complete.

To conclude, using cooperative learning techniques and giving students motivating, age-appropriate, authentic, meaningful and contextualized speaking tasks seem to be the second key to unlock students' full potential to become better English speakers. There is an alternative educational movement where the previously mentioned aspects have been valued throughout the century – Waldorf schools.

## **1.4 Waldorf Education and language teaching in Waldorf schools**

Waldorf Education, or also referred as Steiner Education, is based on the educational philosophy of Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Anthroposophy. The educational movement has been around for 100 years already. In 2019 there were 1182 Waldorf and Rudolf Steiner schools in 66 countries (Waldorf World List, 2019). The first Waldorf school opened in Estonia in 1990 and Waldorf educational approach has gained popularity ever since. In 2020 there are 10 schools and 11 kindergartens across the country according to the Association of Estonian Free Waldorf Schools and Kindergartens.

The Waldorf curriculum is based on the theory of the childhood developmental stages. The curriculum's aim is to educate physical, behavioural, emotional, cognitive, social, and spiritual aspects of each individual, while fostering the creative and inquisitive thought. Dahl (2014) clarifies that the purpose of teaching in Waldorf Education is not just to make students learn different subjects. Its purpose is to support the development of children and young people with the aid of the topics taught in different subjects. Students' individuality is encouraged through activities in which students can express themselves and their personal thoughts and feelings.

In Waldorf Education, foreign language learning starts at the early age. First grade students start with oral language practise and writing is not introduced before the fourth grade. Learning happens through songs, movement and repetition; using games, miming and acting are prevalent. In the fourth grade, students start writing and reading in a foreign language. The spoken word is considered very important and grammar is taught through a lively relationship with the spoken word. Universal textbooks are not used, and children create their own textbooks instead.

The learning process is based on intense interaction between teacher and students from the first grade. Dahl (2014) stresses the importance of oral work. He describes that the language

must be alive, progressing, creative and not restricted by a preformulated textbook exercise. Wiechert (2012) adds that foreign languages must be learned entirely from the human encounter. The main learning process should arise from the activities and conversation between the teacher and students through verbal interaction. This is also one of the reasons why the use of electronic media is considered unfavourable. The authentic experience is regarded as the most beneficial in comparison to the mediated sense experiences.

In Waldorf Education, reducing student's fear or anxiety is one of the aims of the whole study process and the greatest importance is placed on the teacher's social abilities. It is one of requirements of the Waldorf classroom to create an atmosphere of trust between teacher and students. Kiersch (2014) writes that language teachers should, above all, have humour, empathy and ability to grasp the moment in addition to creating a relaxed, expectant and productive atmosphere. Dahl (2014) expands on the previous by adding that the encounter through experience is considered essential. Memory works the best, when accessed through joy, fun, curiosity, amazement and anticipation.

These are the core values of language teaching in Waldorf Education. The curriculum is outlined with several suggestions for each grade, but the specific content of lessons is left for the teacher to decide on. There is a great freedom for the language teacher to decide – what is the most suitable topic, task or material for the current foreign language class while taking into consideration the language level, interests, personalities and the overall everyday situation of the current study group.

The educational methodology in foreign language lessons generally resembles to communicative language teaching (CLT), also referred to as the communicative approach, where interaction as both the means and the goal of language learning is emphasized. In CLT the teacher focuses less on language structures and encourages students to use the language, employing a broad variety of communication activities, such as language games, which are

often carried out in pairs or groups, while correction and intervention during the activities is kept minimal (Roberts, 2004).

What is different from communicative language teaching in Waldorf Education is that role plays and pretending to be somebody else is kept minimal, so that the individuality of the student and his/her thoughts and experiences are kept in focus. Also, topics and texts are carefully chosen to meet the specific needs of the developmental stage of students. The knowledge of grammar and the development of writing skills is subsidiary but not disregarded.

Waldorf education approaches to learning process with student-centred methods and high respect for students' individuality. Language learning starts with only oral practise and speaking skill is considered essential for acquisition of foreign language. Language is learned, among other methods, through group work, various activities and games.

## **1.5 What are language games and gamification?**

According to Haldfield (1999) a game is an activity with rules, a goal and an element of fun. In foreign language lessons, games are often seen as short warm-up activities in the beginning of a lesson or time fillers at the end of a lesson. However, many authors (Badea, 2015; Kim, 1995; Martinson & Chu, 2008; Marzano, 2010; Talak-Kiryk, 2010) contradict this idea and emphasize that games in the foreign language classroom are not just time-filling activities, but they have a great educational value. Kim (1995) and Haldfield (1999) both believe that games should not be regarded as a marginal amusing time filling activity but should rather be seen as an integral part of the foreign language syllabus.

Badea (2015) agrees that language games are an effective way of studying and explains that in the language class games are competitive or collaborative activities done in a relaxed atmosphere. The activities involve precise rules and their goal is improving students' linguistic knowledge of the foreign language.

Language games are often structured and inflexible in means of duration, context and the outcome. Language lessons usually have a fixed timeframe and several goals to achieve in one lesson. If the whole game does not suit well into the current topic, for the specific study group or it does not fit into a given timeframe, there is always the option of gamification – using only some elements of the game. Gamification gives the teacher a possibility to tailor the game to fit the specific topic and learners' needs. Gamification is defined as the use of game elements in non-game contexts and it is used just like games to increase learner performance, motivation and engagement (Deterding et al., 2011). Since the goal and main elements of a game and gamification are the same, no further distinctions between the two are made and both are referred as games. There are several ways to classify language games into categories. Few examples found in literature are presented below.

Jacobs (2019) divides language games into two categories: cooperative and competitive games. Cooperative games are the games where students work in pairs, groups or the whole class forms a team. Competitive games are the games where students work individually competing against each other. The division is not very clear since there are also games where competition and cooperation co-exist in a single game as students cooperate in teams and at the same time compete with other teams.

Hadfield (1999) has a different view on the two main classifications for language games. First, she divides them into two: linguistic games and communicative games, where the first type focuses on accuracy and the correct use of vocabulary and grammar, while the second type focuses on the successful exchange of information and ideas.

The second classification by Hadfield (1999) contains more categories and contains both linguistic games and communicative games. The following list includes her categories:

- Sorting, ordering, or arranging games
- Information gap games
- Guessing games



- Search games
- Matching games
- Labelling games
- Exchanging games
- Board games
- Role play games

Different classifications of games show the broad variety of skills and language items a game could focus on. Therefore, teachers might feel overwhelmed when choosing the most suitable game for each lesson so that learners can benefit the most from it. In Appendix 1 some examples of language games that are suitable for developing language skills in upper-secondary education are given.

## **1.6 The positive effects of using games and gamification**

According to several studies (Badea, 2015; Hanson-Smith, 2016; Kim, 2015; Talak-Kiryk, 2010) using games in the foreign language classroom is one of the best options to get students speaking more and better. Their findings affirm that games improve students' motivation, develop intelligence, reduce language anxiety, and enhance cooperation and creativity.

Using games and gamification in the foreign language classroom is an effective method to enhance students' participation and motivation in class. Students are involved in the learning process and motivated to understand the language (Badea, 2015). However, addressing motivation is not so simple and straightforward; it is connected to students' different personalities. When considering everyday classroom situations, the author agrees with Kim (2015), who proposes that the motivation aspect differentiates among various student groups and students' different learning styles should be considered. Some students are oriented to prizes or grades, while other students are more motivated by achieving personal mastery, enjoying social interactions, having different choices or knowing why the game is used by the

teacher. Therefore, teachers should constantly alternate games used and set different goals to meet every student's motivational needs.

Hanson-Smith (2016) also believes that games are useful for motivating students, especially because they cause students to move away from extrinsic motivation toward intrinsic motivation. Instead of learning for positive grades, students learn to achieve satisfaction in mastery, which has a more positive effect on their learning outcomes.

Games have proven not only to be useful for motivation and language development, but they are also an effective approach to improve student's thinking and overall creativity. Martinson & Chu (2008) show that playing games teaches students how to strategize, consider alternatives, and think flexibly. Talak-Kiryk (2010) suggests that games might have a positive effect on student's independence and higher order thinking skills. She adds that games make it possible for students to use their creativity. The most effective games in language classrooms have more than one right answer and give students opportunities to explore the complexity of language in multilevel situations, improving student's intelligence and creativity and therefore also in long term preparing them for their life.

Students in the secondary education are at a very vulnerable age; therefore, teacher should minimize the risk of getting laughed at or feeling incompetent in the classroom. Games are a suitable remedy offering effective tools for learning because they create a safe and enjoyable environment in which students can think outside the box and explore alternative decisions without the risk of failure (Martinson & Chu, 2008). Students often get so engaged in the activity that they forget to think about their fear of failure and concentrate on achieving the goal of the game. Talak-Kiryk (2010) adds that in addition to previously mentioned effects, a successful game also boosts students' self-esteem and develops their social skills and ability to cooperate.

During the period of five years, Marzano (2010) examined the influence of academic games in a variety of classes and subject areas. He is convinced that using games in lessons is one of the most effective methods for learning. After analysing the 60 studies that he was involved in during this period, he finds that using games for learning purposes in the classroom could be associated with an average 20%-point gain in student achievement. This remarkable progress should not be overlooked by teachers in all possible fields of education.

Using games and gamification in the foreign language classroom helps the teacher to motivate students, relieve their anxiety, promote their creativity, stimulate thinking processes, enhance interactivity and support their cooperation. It is indisputably an effective approach to learning but, using games for educational purposes might also have downsides and limitations. In the next section the possible limitations and problems that have been discussed about using games in the learning context are presented.

### **1.7 The possible difficulties of using games and gamification**

Despite all the previously listed advantages of using games in foreign language classroom, the method is not widespread and commonly practised, especially not in the upper-secondary education. There are many different reasons why teachers prefer using traditional teacher-centred teaching methods instead of activating students with suitable games.

One of the most cited concern of teachers is that games are too time-consuming, and they are considering both – the time spent in classroom and the time spent on preparation (Avikainen, 2015; Badea, 2015; Gabla, 2014; Miller & Metz, 2004). Badea (2015) investigated teachers' opinions on using games, and majority of them claimed that using games is too time-consuming and complicated because they cannot find enough suitable games and usually need to create games themselves. The same result is discussed by Gabla (2014) and Avikainen (2015), who found that teachers in Estonian schools are reluctant to use games in the foreign language

classroom because they consider using games time-consuming and complex. Some of the additional reasons mentioned were that games require special classroom arrangement, students are difficult to control, and high level of cooperation skills are needed among students.

The situation seems to be the same in universities. Miller & Metz (2004) investigated student perceptions on active learning and the usage of different teaching methods by faculty members. 89% of professors predicted favourable effects of using educational games but seldom use them. The researchers suggest that one reason behind neglecting games in the classroom might be lack of training and the tendency of teachers being accustomed to traditional ways of teaching. Their study shows that 44% of teachers claimed that they have become too accustomed to the teacher-centred methods and their students also believe it is the biggest reason behind their reluctance to use games.

Games are often unpredictable; their outcome cannot be controlled and evaluated. Teachers who wish to precisely predict and direct the study process might avoid using games due to this aspect. Badea (2015) and Avikainen (2015) both report that in some teachers' opinion games are difficult to evaluate and therefore unsuitable for frequent use in the study process.

To sum up, the reasons why teachers might fail to realize the importance of games in the foreign language classrooms are that games are considered to be too time-consuming, difficult to control and evaluate, games demand previous research and training and teachers might have become too accustomed to more traditional ways of teaching.

## CHAPTER 2

### 2.1 The study group and the first questionnaire

The research was carried out in relatively small Waldorf educational school in Viljandi – Viljandi Vaba Waldorf School which was established in 1993 and the upper-secondary level was added to the existing nine grades in 2016. The study group in focus is comprised of mixed ability students in a composite class from 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. In the beginning of the study the participants were between 16 and 19 years and most of them were relatively new to the school where the research was carried out (Figure 1) – therefore it can be said that Waldorf Education was novelty for more than half of the study group. The study group consisted of 14 students – six boys and eight girls. The students were divided between the three grades as following: 10<sup>th</sup> grade – 5 students, 11<sup>th</sup> grade – 8 students and 12<sup>th</sup> grade – 1 student.

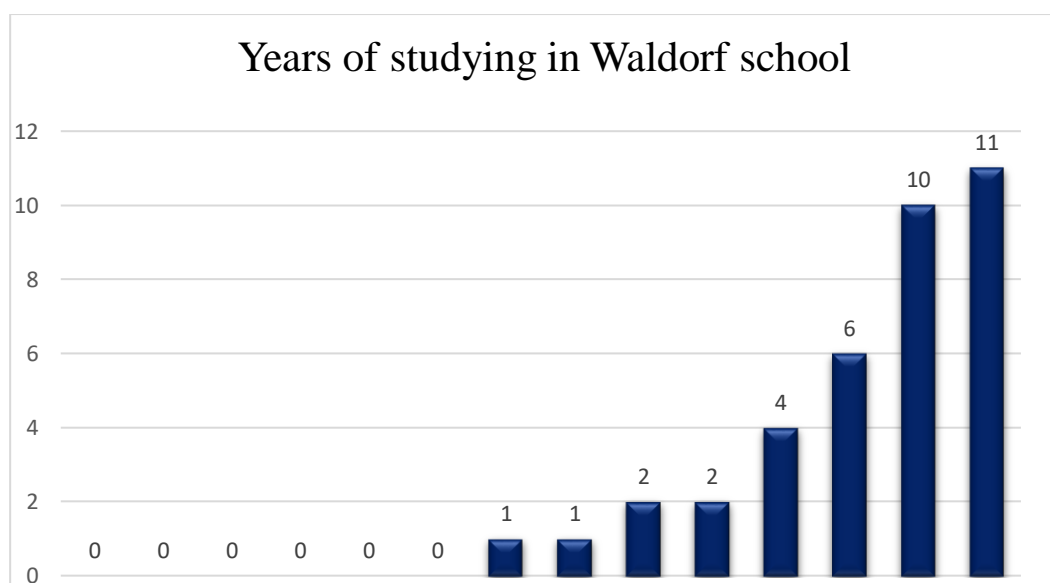


Figure 1. Years of studying in Waldorf school.

This study utilized the quantitative research traditions with the inclusion of a questionnaires (Appendix 3 and 4). In the beginning of the study period, the first questionnaire was composed and carried out to find out information about students' attitudes towards learning English and opinions about the context their English lessons. The first questionnaire (Appendix 3) was

partly inspired by Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale developed by Horwitz et al (1986). Some questions were modified, and some added according to the literature discussed in the first chapter of this study to meet the specific aims of current thesis. The questionnaire also included a sub-section with questions about personal information, such as age and gender. Students were asked to evaluate their weakest sub-skill, the current level of speaking skills and the level of anxiety they usually have when they are asked to speak in English speaking classes. The opinions were marked on Likert scale from 1-5.

The questionnaire was carried out in an English lesson in September 2019 on paper (Appendix 3). The questions were written in English, but several questions were translated and clarified beforehand to ensure that everyone understood them. The questionnaires were anonymous, and students were given the choice to complete the questionnaire or to pass the opportunity and wait until others finish filling in the questionnaires. None of them expressed their views against completing the questionnaire and so the sample consists of 14 students. Since the majority of the study group was underage permission slips were handed out to be signed by their parents before completing the questionnaire.

In accordance to the literature discussed in the first chapter half of the students in the study group expressed their opinion about speaking to be their weakest skill and most difficult one to master (Figure 2). Four students claimed it is writing that they have most difficulties with, and three students said it is listening skill that they need to work on. None of the students assessed their reading skill as the weakest.

## Personal Opinion About The Weakest Sub-skill

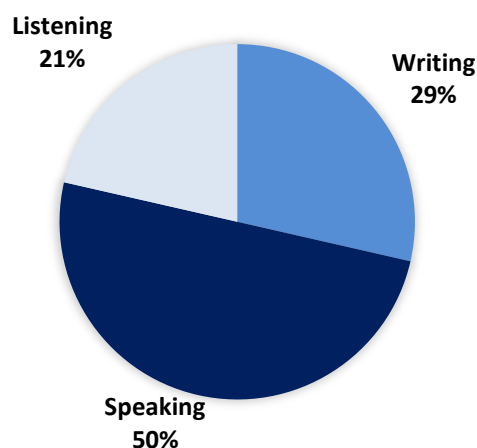


Figure 2. Students' personal opinions about their weakest sub-skill in the beginning of schoolyear.

The study group was asked to evaluate their motivation to become better at speaking English on a scale from 1-5 with resulting group's average answer of 3.89. In addition, they were asked to evaluate their current speaking skill on a scale from 1 to 5, number 1 meaning that they cannot speak any English at all and number 5 meaning that they speak perfect English in every situation. The results varied from 3-5 with the group's average answer of 3.875.

When evaluating their anxiety in English speaking lessons, only one of the students evaluated their anxiety to maximum level – 5, which was described as the student being very scared and not rather speaking at all. Three male students chose level 1 and claimed to feel relaxed in English speaking lessons. Four students saw their anxiety as medium and four said it was rather high. The average anxiety score was 2.86. There were no significant distinctions linked between the level of anxiety and students having learned for longer period in Waldorf school. The students were also asked to state if they agree with the sentence: *"I usually experience palpitation and sweating in my English-speaking class."* and the average score of 2.78 shows that anxiety in English speaking classes exists among the study group.

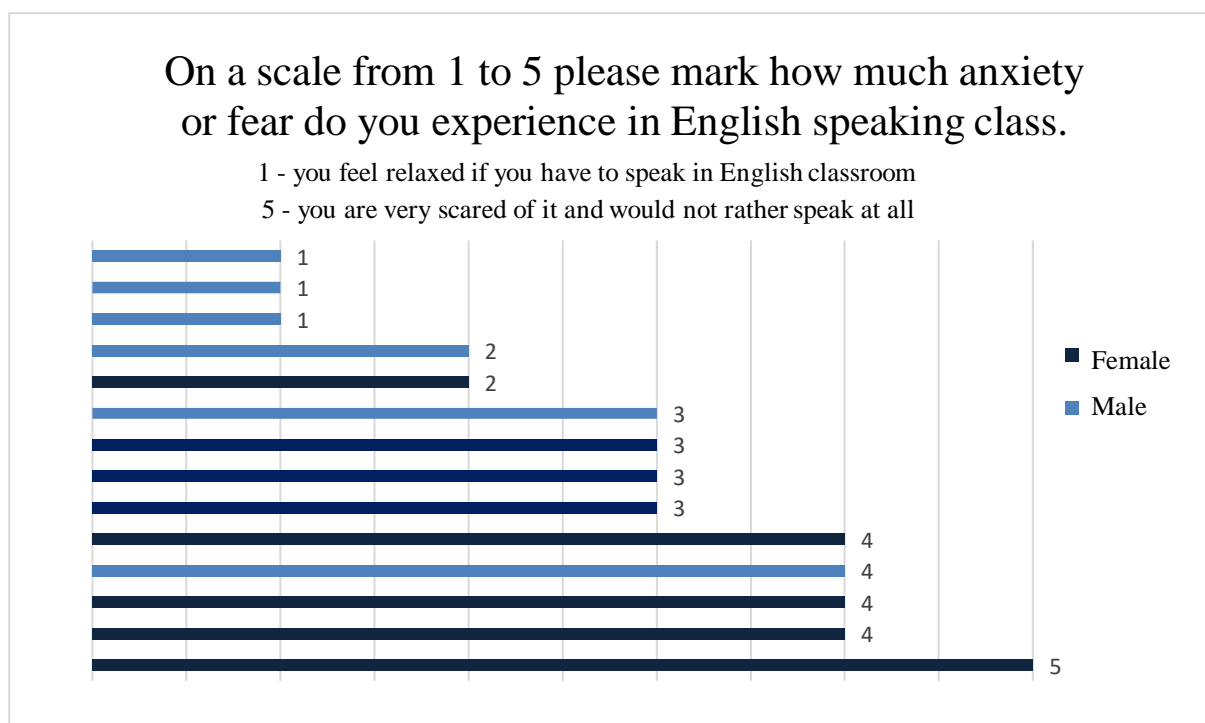


Figure 3. Self-evaluation of anxiety in English speaking lesson in September 2019.

When trying to find more information about the different causes of study group's anxiety, two statements were made, and students were asked to evaluate how strongly they agree or disagree with them. First sentence "*I am afraid of my classmates' reaction, when I speak in classroom*" had average answer 3 (neither or not sure). The second statement "*I am afraid of negative feedback from my teacher*" got slightly lower average answer 2 (disagree).

Students generally agreed with the statement "*Making mistakes is a natural part of the learning process*" with the average score of 4.21. At the same time, they admitted their reluctance to making mistakes when speaking "*I speak English only if I know that the sentence, I am going to say is correct*" with the average score of 2.91.

## 2.2 The second questionnaire

The second questionnaire (Appendix 4) was carried out in March 2020 in English and using Google Forms. The students were again asked to evaluate their anxiety levels in English



speaking lessons and evaluate their speaking skill. Additional questions were asked about the games that were played during the study process from September 2019 until March 2020.

The negative influence of Corona virus and distant learning influenced this study and even after several reminders, one of the students left the questionnaire unanswered, Therefore the data from the two questionnaires cannot be compared.

This time the students evaluated their English-speaking skill 3.46 as the average score. The second anxiety evaluation showed the average of 2.54. There was nobody who thought that their anxiety was at the maximum (5). The same number of male students as in the first questionnaire expressed their anxiety in English lessons to be the lowest (1). Four female students evaluated their anxiety as level 3 and two female and one male student thought it was level 4.

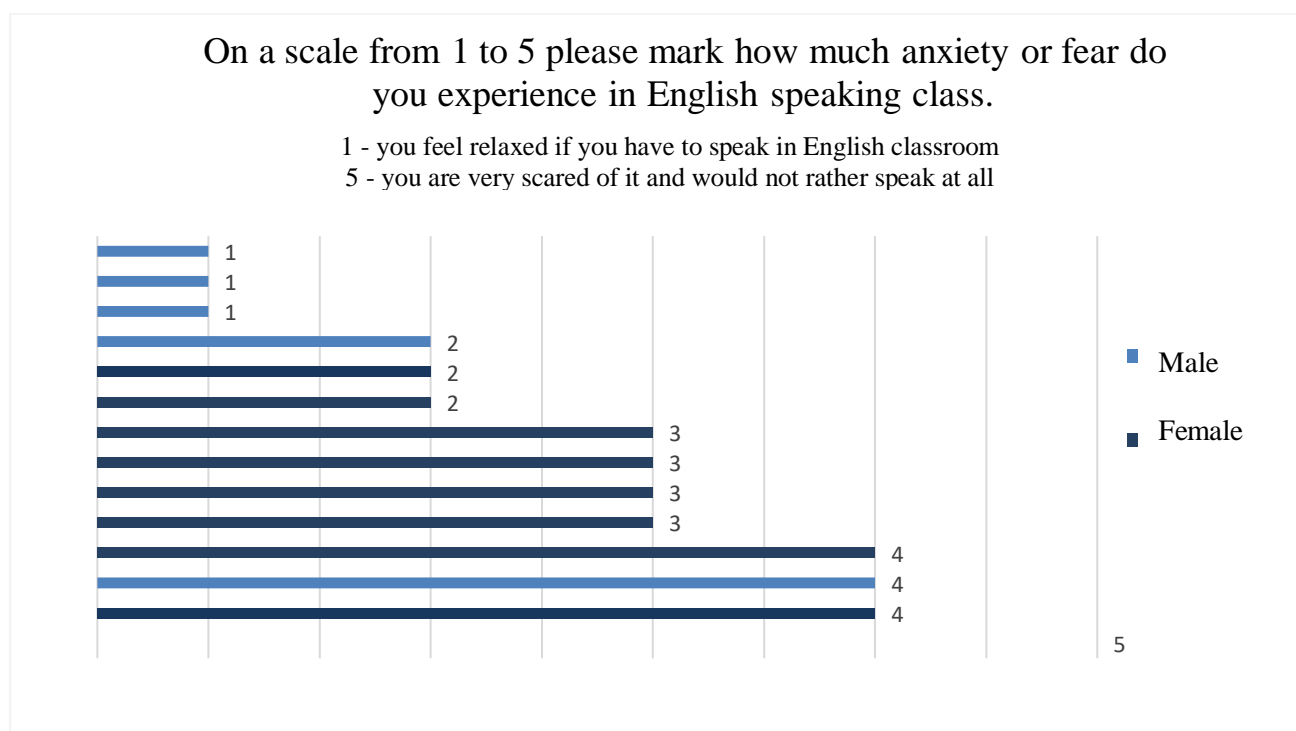


Figure 4. Self-evaluation of anxiety in English speaking lesson in March 2020.

Most of the students in the study group agreed that games should be a part of studying English in the upper-secondary education with the average score of 3.78. Two students strongly agreed and six agreed.

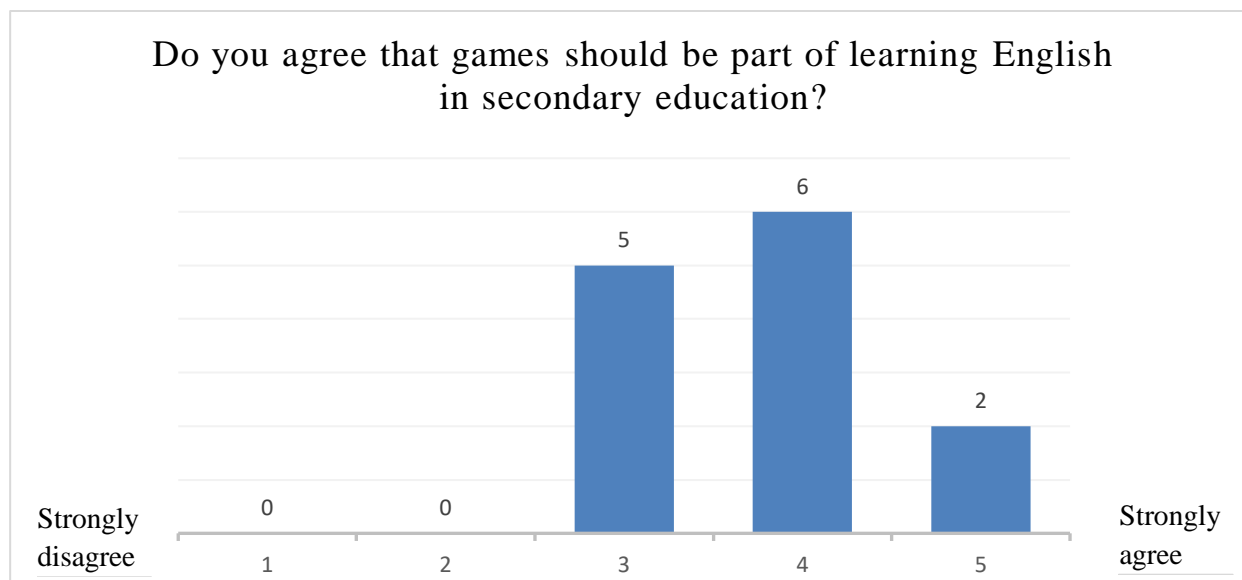


Figure 5. Students opinions about games being part of learning English in secondary education.

Students gave several reasons for why the games should be used in their language lessons. Only one student preferred not to give explanation to his/her views (*“No opinion”*). When analysing the answers given, there were several different positive aspects of using games that the students listed. Four students mentioned fun in their answers: *“It’s a fun yet effective way to learn”*; *“To make learning fun”*; *“Because it’s fun way to show that English is like every other language”*. They also named raising motivation as one most important reasons why games should be played in English lessons: *“It will motivate students to be in class”* and also the positive effect of games on memorizing process *“that motivates to learn a language and I can remember things easier”*; *“I personally felt like it got me in the mood for studying and that I remember things more when I learn them through playing”*. Some students mentioned that games help them to practise foreign language. Three students brought out the anxiety aspect of using games: *“Usually people have fun when they are playing so it helps to loosen up and*

*decrease anxiety”; “it helps to build confidence between students”.* One student described the positive effect of using games on thinking and at the same time mentioned their usefulness in mixed ability classes: *“It activates key parts of logical thinking in your brain and also encourages the ones who are not so gifted at English.”*

The students were also asked to tick two of the most important aspects that they gained with the games used in the lessons during the study period. This time the options were listed, and they made their choice between them. Most popular answer for eight students was that the biggest gain has been learning new vocabulary. The other choices got equal results with at least four answers to *“Learning grammar”*; *“Having fun”*, *“Getting to know your classmates”*; *“Lowering my speaking anxiety”*. *“Practising English speaking skill”* was mentioned five times.

Please think about all the English lessons you had since September and tick two most important aspects you gained from these English lessons

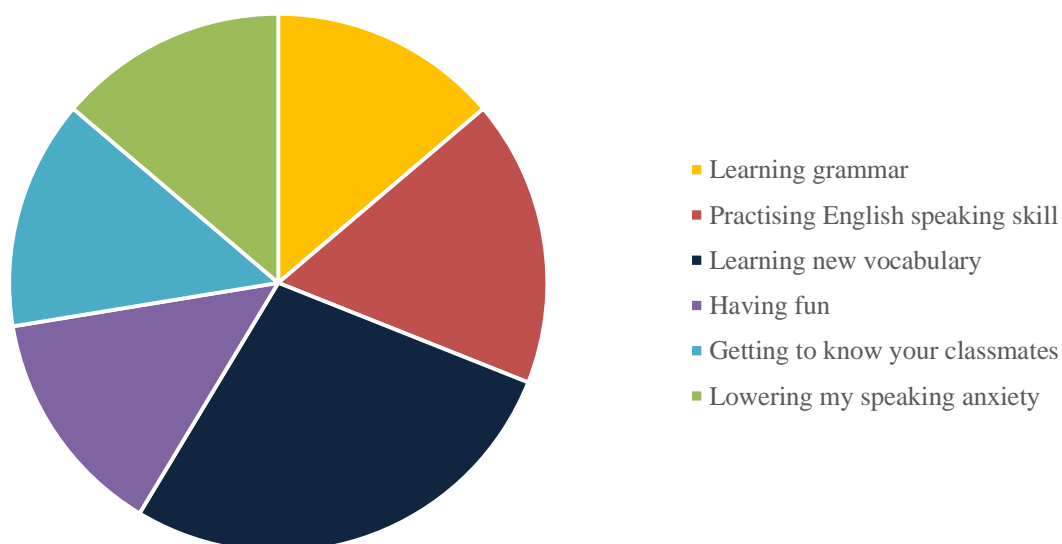


Figure 5. Choosing the most positive aspect of games used in lessons in March 2020.

When asked about their favourite and least favourite games, no similar answers were given. Two students enjoyed games where teacher threw a ball around the class to activate previous knowledge, at the same time the same game was disliked by one other student. Some students enjoyed being in the centre of attention while others would have rather played games with less attention drawn on them. One student liked every game played in a group (*“every game with groups”*) and another enjoyed games that made him/her to think about different aspects (*“games where you can think”*). Three students claimed that their favourite game was *Which one would you choose and why?* One enjoyed playing *Family fortune* the most and another marked *I have never game* as his/her favourite.

When enquiring about the games that they did not like five students did not have any least favourite games or chose not to list them. The games that were too easy were not considered to be unsuitable: *“The ones in which we all cannot participate to the fullest to show best grammar or other nuances that we are capable of displaying in order to advance in English.”* One of the students described the negative influence of adding competition to the game and therefore speeding up the process so that everyone cannot learn at their own pace *“I didn’t like that game where we had to find synonyms with group. I prefer to do it alone, because everyone’s skills were different, and they did faster, and I didn’t learn anything about synonyms because others group members did so fast.”*

Two students mentioned that the games where they were asked to describe things were not among their favourite tasks in a language lesson: *“Where we are in circle and pass around some object and we have to describe it with one word”*; *“Describing something and drawing it”* According to their critical feedback, the described games were removed from the collection of games presented in Appendix 1.

As the study group consisted of 14 different students with different backgrounds, interests, language skills and developmental needs they all liked and disliked different games,

but they mostly agreed that games should be part of their English lessons. At least half of the students in the study group reported having experienced sweating and palpitations during English speaking lessons and evaluated their anxiety level rather high. When asking for the cause, students expressed that they fear their classmates' negative reactions more than negative feedback from their teacher. Unfortunately, the anxiety levels did not significantly reduce during the six months of study process with the help of using games, but the decrease between the first and second anxiety evaluation score show a slight alleviation. This might be due to the fact that relieving anxiety is a long process and six months is too short time for noticing greater progress.

Most of the students agreed that games should be part of their English lessons and gave several reasons why. They listed many positive sides but also revealed the tendency that different personalities benefit from different aspects of the games. One prevailing statement for more than half of the study group was that games helped them to improve their vocabulary. The answer can be explained by the broad range topics that games can cover, and that new vocabulary is better acquired through the necessity for it during interaction, rather than memorizing premade word lists.

Other reasons the study group named as to why games should be used in upper-secondary education included the ideas that games are fun and raise motivation. They reported enjoying the fun part of using games in the lesson. Although low motivation was not the problem in the study group, they were convinced that games were helpful when memorizing language learned and getting in the mood for studying.

When trying to answer the question what kind of games the study group prefers no common answer was given, students favoured different games for many reasons. To generalize the answers given it could be said that students in the study group prefer collaborative games,

that are fun, stimulate their thinking process and give opportunities of getting to know their classmates better.

To explain the lower scores on speaking skill self-evaluation, it could be hypothesised that games gave students many various speaking situations and topics that they have not experienced before and therefore presented them with new perspectives on their language skills.

### **2.3 Compiling the collection of games**

The reason for compiling a collection of games was the inability to find suitable material to use in the upper-secondary language lessons. Most of the existing collections have two major issues (Cummins, 2014; Lindstromberg, 2004). They mostly concentrate on teaching younger students with lower language levels and the examples of games are not sufficient in meeting all the different social, motivational and language needs of an upper-secondary level mixed-ability study group.

The collection of games in Appendix 1 was compiled as a result of five-year research and teaching process in Viljandi Vaba Waldorf School with students aged 14 – 19. The games described in Appendix 1 have been chosen according to the principles described in the literature review. Most of them are communicative collaborative tasks that are meaning-focused, encourage using creativity, raise motivation, reduce anxiety and make students use language actively in various speaking situations.

All the games have been tested with the study group. Additionally, several games have also been tested with other classes in a similar age-group by the same teacher. During the process, fitting into the given lesson timeframe, the comprehensibility of instructions, usefulness of the resources and student motivation was constantly monitored and oral feedback from the students was taken into consideration. The games were altered according to the feedback from the students, two experienced English teachers and the testing process.

There are three different origins for the games in the collection. First, there is a group of social games played by the author during social gatherings, that have been remodelled for the use of language classroom (*I have never game*, *What do we have in common?* and *Post-it stickers*). The games were originally played in L1 for entertainment. They were chosen for their novelty and for an already proven element of fun. *Family fortune* is an adaptation from a popular TV-game show that can be successfully used as a language game.

The second group consists of the games that have been inspired by numerous motivating authors and English teachers, such as Jo Cummins, Mike Astbury, Mare Kitsnik, and by inspirational colleagues from Estonian schools. Mike Astbury has influenced the *Important questions* game with his *Cities and Amenities discussion activity* and *Blackboard guessing game*, which is an adaptation of the popular classroom game called the *Hot Seat* triggered by his article “Adapting your go-to games: backs to the board” (2017). Cummins (2014) gave the author the idea for *Distraction Challenge*, *Spot the Liar* and *Pronounce and Go!* One version of *Running Dictation* has been described on the British Council’s webpage and widely used in language classrooms. During the course *Using Games in the Secondary and Upper-secondary Education*, Kitsnik (2020) introduced the framework for the game *Which one would you choose and why*. All the games mentioned in the second group were not just copied but rather inspired by and adjusted from the previously named authors to meet the specific needs and interests of the study group.

The last group of the games were created by the author. *Electing the Class President* is developed using speed dating style of activities and adjusted for students in the upper-secondary education. *Speak, Listen and Ask* is a game which was derived from the natural process of warming up and taking interest in the student’s lives, with the hope of making them listen to each other more. *Interviewing Your Classmates* had the similar implication, but with the

element of whole class attention added. *If I Won Million Euros* also started as a warm-up exercise that had an element of *Guess who wrote it* added.

The collection was compiled during the study process in 2019 and 2020. Most of the games were previously known and tested before the study was conducted. The written description of games was given to two experienced English teachers to read and comment on the comprehensibility and usability. Adjustments were made according to their feedback.

Both teachers believed that the collection of games is beneficial to the development of speaking skills and for activating students in language classes. They gave short feedback and mentioned several games that they were going to include in their own teaching. The descriptions for the games: *I have never*, *Distraction challenge* and *Which one would you choose and why?* were improved according to their feedback. One game was omitted from the collection because of the given recommendations.

The collection of games includes 15 different game instructions suitable for developing English speaking skill in upper-secondary education and recommendations for adaptations. The games develop different sub-skills, but speaking is always one of them. The author is convinced that the games have positive effect on students' willingness to speak, creativity, language anxiety, vocabulary and grammar knowledge, motivation and overall class climate just to name a few observed factors.

The majority of games could also be adapted to younger students or could be translated and used in other foreign language classes. Appendix 2 gives several ideas for adapting the games to meet the specific needs of different study groups. The adaptations were developed on the basis of the author's five-year teaching experience and driven by incidents where the same game played with several classes had very different outcomes. The given ideas for adaptations serve as an example and all the games can be developed further and altered in multiple other ways.



Most of the games require minimal amount of resources and can be played in different surroundings and with differently sized study groups. They have been found to be useful in mixed ability study groups and have been proven to be most effective for students who are reluctant to speak and have fallen behind in this skill. Using technological resources in the games is avoided since the study takes place in a Waldorf educational setting where the use of technological devices is unwanted, and the author also believes that the technology might distract students from real-life interactions.

## **2.4 Integrating games to English lessons**

During the study period there were three 45-minute lessons of English every week. On Mondays two lessons followed each other and on Tuesdays there was one lesson. Each week at least one game was used. The games were used as ice breakers in the beginning of the lesson, but several games were employed to study new grammar skills, vocabulary or to revise studied material. Most of the games used were collaborative. The games used were sorting games, vocabulary challenges, role plays with writing the dialogues and guessing games. As the current study focuses on the games that concentrate on the development of oral skills all the games used with the study group are not included in the collection.

There was no course book and every lesson was planned from the scratch, choosing the tasks and activities suitable for each topic and the specific group of students. Most of the lessons were based on the components of the task based learning framework (Willis, 1996), with the pre-task, which introduces the topic and the task; the task-cycle, where language was actively used by the students, usually with a suitable game, and the language focus phase, where the analysis or practise of the studied language items was carried out. Dictionaries were available in each lesson and sometimes distributed to the tables. The dictionaries were rarely used, and students often inquired the teacher about the vocabulary item that they did not know.

During the study process there was an ongoing reflecting process to analyse the mood of the students, the outcome of the games, the instructions given, and the time spent on the game. The notes were taken at the end of a day, looking back at the lessons.

There are few recommendations to follow, when incorporating games to foreign language classes. Ur (2016) lists five main pieces of advice to make games work for every study group. First, it has to be made sure that games are fun and challenging. Second, the games need to be learning rich. Third, the game has to be simple and the instructional phase as short as possible. Fourth, all or most of the students have to be involved. Fifth, there should be more than one winner.

The author of this study adds more recommendations to the previous list. First, a good strategy for sorting students into pairs and bigger groups needs to be implemented. Letting students choose for themselves is undesirable because they tend to work together only with certain students. One of the simplest tools for that is a set of UNO-cards, which are easy to distribute; formed group sizes are easily varied, and either grouping by numbers or colours can be used. Second, games do not need to have a prize or winners; playing a game in the lesson is already rewarding. Third, a broad variety of language games is recommended to be used in the lessons, including games that encourage fast reaction but also games where students can relax and contemplate. Activating games serve as an excellent motivation boost but being active and alert all the time can also be straining and should not be used in every lesson. The last recommendation is knowing the students. Games are the most effective when the teacher knows how to motivate the specific study group, how they get along with each other, and what their interests, fears, hopes and beliefs are.

The games are sorted by their length and difficulty. Shorter games that can be used as warm-ups are described first and the games that require more preparation and classroom time

are presented last. The length of the games mentioned in the beginning of each description is approximate and depends on specific class size and students.

## CONCLUSION

The main purpose of the current MA thesis “Using Games to Develop Speaking Skills in Upper-Secondary Education” was to collect information about different problems that occur while students are developing their English-speaking skill and to investigate the effect of using games to teach English to study group of 14 students. A collection of games that can be used in upper-secondary education English as a foreign language lessons to improve students’ speaking skills was developed and tested with the study group.

The topic arose from the author’s search for suitable games to teach English in upper-secondary education and was inspired by Waldorf educational setting of the study. The topic is relevant because the educational policy in Estonia recommends using the communicative teaching method where students are active and use meaning-focused tasks, but the change from teacher-centred methods to learner-centred ones has been slow to happen. The research questions that arose during the study process are: What are the problems that students have when they are developing their English-speaking skill? What are the most beneficial aspects of using games in language classrooms according to the language learning group under study? What kind of games do they prefer?

As the literature review demonstrated, anxiety is one of the main factors that inhibits student’s development in speaking. There are three recommendations that can be suggested for alleviating the level of anxiety in language class. Firstly, by having a supportive and friendly attitude towards the students; secondly, by lowering the frequency and importance of evaluation while using positive error correction techniques; thirdly, by trying to eliminate the risk of embarrassment with constantly monitoring students and making efforts to improve the overall classroom climate.

One way to achieve these recommendations is through implementing a wide range of suitable language games that not only reduce anxiety but also raise motivation, improve student's intelligence and creativity, enhance interactivity and support their cooperation.

The study took place with a small composite class of 14 students at the upper-secondary level in Viljandi Vaba Waldorfschool. A questionnaire was filled by the students at the beginning and at the end of a six-month long study process. During this time, different games were used in English lessons. The games that were found to be the most suitable for developing English speaking skill were compiled into a collection.

As an answer to the question what are the problems that students have when they are developing their English-speaking skill? As the literature review proposed, the same result was reached in the study process. Language anxiety seemed to be one of the biggest problems for the chosen study group in English speaking lessons and that anxiety was rather caused by the negative feedback from other students than from the teacher.

When searching for the most beneficial aspects of using games in language classrooms according to the language learning group under study it was found that students consider the used games most beneficial for learning new vocabulary. The students listed many other positive sides and revealed the tendency that different personalities benefit from different aspects of the games. They also mentioned that games are fun, raise motivation, lower speaking anxiety, teach grammar and give chances to practise English speaking skills and to get to know your classmates.

When trying to answer the question what kind of games the study group prefers no common answer was given. This clearly showed that students have different personalities, fears and needs in the study process. Therefore, teachers should always vary the games used in the lesson, so that each student feels involved in the most suitable way for him/her. If trying to generalize the answers given it could be said that students in the study group prefer

collaborative games, that are fun, stimulate their thinking process and give opportunities of getting to know their classmates better.

This paper encourages teachers and researchers to investigate and experiment the positive effect of using games in language classrooms not only in Waldorf schools, but also in mainstream public schools. The thesis encourages teachers to adapt communicative games to create a relaxed atmosphere where students can take an interactive role within a cooperative environment. The games presented in Appendix 1 add practical value for the thesis.

It is important to state that the conclusions are tentative and cannot be generalized because of the small size of the study group. Nevertheless, it can be said that the study succeeded in illustrating some of the key features of using language games as a method of developing speaking skills in upper-secondary education.

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## Appendix 1

# **A Collection of Games Suitable for Developing Speaking Skills in Upper-Secondary Education**

The list of games included:

- What do we have in common?
- Speak, listen and ask
- Blackboard guessing game
- Post-it stickers
- I have never game
- If I won million euros
- Distraction challenge
- Pronounce and go
- Running dictation
- Spot the liar
- Which one would you choose and why?
- Interviewing your classmates
- Electing the class president
- The important questions game
- Family fortunes

# What do we have in common?

Student interaction	Group work in groups of three
Time (in minutes)	15-20
Skill(s) in focus	Speaking, vocabulary
Preparation	Print one Venn diagram for every group. Figure 1.
Instructions	

Students are divided into groups of three, if possible, (if not possible, the teacher can also step in or one group of two students can be formed). Each group has an A4 size paper with Venn diagram and pens. Their task is to talk with each other and find at least three things that make them different from their groupmates (the biggest division), at least three things that all three have in common (the center) and at least three things that each student has in common with the student next to him/her. The example include: have never broken a bone, have blue eyes, have a pet, fear spiders, love ice-cream, were born in May etc. During the discussion the students take notes and fill in the chart.

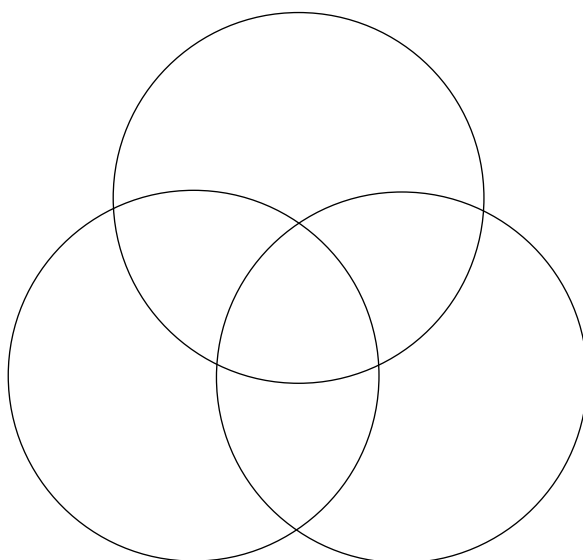


Figure 1. Chart for finding things in common and different.

# Speak, listen and ask

Student interaction	In pairs, frontal discussion
Time (in minutes)	10-15
Skill(s) in focus	Conversation skills, reported speech
Preparation	-
Instructions	

Students sit in pairs, opposite from each other. They are given a topic to speak about, for example three positive things from last week, what you did yesterday, what was your holiday like...

After both students have had enough time to share their memories (3-5 minutes), their task is to tell the study group about what his/her partner told him/her about in reported speech. They do it just shortly, without much detail. Now it is the teacher's turn to ask one question about the information just heard. For example, student: *„Mike told me that he visited the cinema and ate some pizza this weekend. “*

*Teacher: „What movie did he watch? “*

*Student „Um, I didn't ask. “*

*Teacher „But did he bake the pizza himself? “*

*Student „I didn't ask that either. “*

The question should be simple and directly about the information heard. The speaker gets a point or wins when he/she knows the answer to teacher's question.

# Blackboard guessing game

Student interaction    Whole class

Time (in minutes)    10-20

Skill(s) in focus    Describing

Preparation    -

Instructions

Students take their chairs and form a semicircle in front of the blackboard with one student sitting in the centre with his/her back turned to the blackboard. Then one word (object/person/phenomenon/...) is written on the blackboard so that the student in the centre cannot see it. First one is written by the teacher, but the following words can also be chosen by students with the teacher's approval. The teacher checks if everyone understands the meaning of the word written on the blackboard; if not, the translation could be added for a second and then deleted. Then each student has to describe the word on the blackboard with one sentence. They cannot repeat what has already been said. When each student in the semicircle has said their sentence, the student in the middle can take a guess about what was written on the blackboard.

If the answer is correct, another student takes his/her place in the middle and a new word is written on the blackboard. But if the answer is incorrect, another round of explanations will follow by the students in the semicircle. The student in the middle can answer after the last one finishes.

# Post-it Stickers

Student interaction	In pairs, frontal discussion
Time (in minutes)	10-15
Skill(s) in focus	Asking questions, revising vocabulary
Preparation	A pile of post-it stickers
Instructions	

First round should be organized by the teacher to avoid confusion. The teacher writes topical words or names on the stickers and places them on students' foreheads, so that the students cannot see what was written on it. Now they ask closed questions one by one to find out what is written on their post-it sticker.

The game can be played for example with famous people, a set of vocabulary items like animals, vehicles, professions, food items, etc.

# I have never game

Student interaction	Whole class
Time (in minutes)	10-20
Skill(s) in focus	Revising Present Perfect
Preparation	-

## Instructions

Students sit in a circle and the teacher stands in the centre. The teacher says the first sentence, example, “I have never seen an elephant”. The sentence should be a lie, so that in the current scenario the teacher has seen an elephant. Everyone who has seen an elephant now stand up and switch their places. Those who have never seen an elephant remain in their seats. But the teacher also tries to sit down in the middle of this chaotic movement, so now there is one student left without a seat – now he or she has to say the next sentence. Something he or she has done before, for example “I have never worn a dress”, “I have never been to France”, “I have never baked a cake”).

There are some rules to consider. Firstly, once the student has stood up, he/she cannot sit back to the same chair anymore, as he/she needs to find a new place. Secondly, students tend to get carried away with such games, and try to use questions that are unsuitable for the classroom context, (for example: “I have never smoked “, “I have never drunk alcohol. “). For such cases it is essential for teacher to pause the game, explain the situation and ask the student to come up with a new sentence.



# If I won million euros

Student interaction    Individual assignment, frontal discussion

Time (in minutes)    10-20

Skill(s) in focus    Revising conditionals / Present perfect / ...

Preparation    Prepare paper slips for each student, bring a basket/bow/...

Instructions

Each student gets a paper slip. The teacher gives instructions and writes examples to the blackboard. If the chosen grammar topic is conditionals, students are asked to write three sentences on the paper. The first part of the sentences is given, and the students are asked to finish the sentences in an appropriate conditional so that the sentences are true about themselves.

For Example: 1. If I have some spare money this month, ...

2. If I won million euros, ....

3. If I had been raised by wolves, ....

After everyone finishes writing, they fold up their papers and the teacher collects them in a basket. Then after mixing the papers up, the teacher gives each student a paper slip from the basket. If a student receives his/her own, they need to switch it with someone else. Taking turns, they read the sentences aloud, guess who wrote each sentence and give an explanation why they think so. If they guess correctly the first time, they get a point. If they are not correct, they have to wait until everyone else finishes guessing and then guess again. Guessing gets easier at the end of the game by which time most of the answers have already been given.

# Distraction Challenge

Student interaction	In pairs, switching partners
Time (in minutes)	10-20
Skill(s) in focus	Conversation skills
Preparation	One small item for each student that acts as a counter
Instructions	

Students are all divided into pairs. In case of unequal number, the teacher joins the game. Each student is given a counter (something small and available, for example pebbles, chestnuts, beans etc.). Students stand facing each other, holding the counter with their left hands, the palm open towards the other student. The right hand hangs on the side.

The aim of this game is to distract the other student, so that the student can snatch the counter from his/her hand using the right hand. So, students in pairs start a conversation on as an interesting topic as possible and try to distract the other student so that they forget the counter and let it be taken away. The student who uses L1 during the conversation loses his/her counter automatically.

The students switch their partners and try the same with another student. Those who have already lost their counter, continue the game, they just have to stand with both of their hands on the sides. Those who were successful in the first round have now two counters in their open palm. The game can continue as long as it is interesting, or until everyone has had a conversation with everyone.

# Pronounce and Go!

Student interaction	In two groups
Time (in minutes)	15-20
Skill(s) in focus	Pronunciation, using your voice
Preparation	Print two pages with different sentences.

## Instructions

The game requires much space so it is good to take the lesson outside or somewhere where some noise can be made. Before the lesson, the teacher needs to prepare two different lists of various words or sentences (Example 1). Students are divided into two groups A and B, and are placed facing each other. At the beginning of the game, the distance between two groups is small, approximately 2-3 meters.

The first members of both teams get one set of different sentences on paper. The first student in Group A reads the first sentence aloud so that the other group can hear it. The first student in Group B needs to repeat what he or she heard. If the sentence is not the same, it must be repeated by the Group A reader until it is heard correctly. If the sentence is correct, the first student from Group A will pass the sentence sheet to the next student and go to the end of the group, but other students in Group A need to remain on their places and cannot step forward. In this way the distance between two groups gradually grows bigger and students need to speak louder and clearer to make themselves heard. The teacher can stand in the middle of the two groups to check if the correct sentence has been heard. The game ends when all the sentences have been read or the distance is already too big.

Example 1. Sentences used with 14 students after studying different homophones.

Group A

1. This week I am just too weak.
2. I think this deer is dear to you.
3. The first edition had an addition to it.
4. There was a lovely beech growing at the beach.
5. Is it the new jeans or your genes, that you look so good?
6. Put the stake through the steak right now.
7. The disillusion showed steel dissolution in water.
8. The flea fled in terror.
9. The anxiety makes me sweat.
10. The Finnish always finish last.
11. I want our work to be finished in an hour.
12. I feel so energetic and charismatic today.
13. I wanted to catch up with the man with a ketchup.
14. The serial killer had had some cereal for breakfast.
15. No new ads were added while we were away.
16. Do you know the new girl?

Group B

1. Stand under the fir to keep your fur dry.
2. I can't hear you from here.
3. I am not allowed to speak aloud.
4. My cat is just adorable.
5. I had terrific time in the amusement park.
6. I bought a dress that was on sale and went sailing.
7. Which witch is the bad one?
8. I was so bored at the board meeting.
9. Can you see under the sea?
10. I want to get lost in the desert and find the best dessert.
11. Please close your door, your clothes are everywhere.
12. There were none nuns left.
13. I would have not guessed that the guests are coming.
14. Yesterday I hauled my dog through the hall.
15. I want to shoo this ugly-shoe-person away.
16. The foreword led us forward to the darkness.

# Running Dictation

Student interaction	In pairs
Time (in minutes)	20-25
Skill(s) in focus	Pronunciation, spelling
Preparation	Printed paper slips with sentences on the walls in different places. A4 paper for each team
Instructions	

The game requires some preparation. The teacher writes 6-10 sentences on a different paper slip. Using coloured paper is recommended, so that the slips are easily distinguishable. The slips are then distributed and placed around the school yard or the hall, not too far from the classroom. An element of hunting down the answers adds fun to the game. When the game is played in the classroom, there is no running around and searching for the paper slips. Some students really enjoy the racing and discovering in this game.

Students are divided into pairs. Each team will need a sheet of paper and a pen. Students take turns for finding a paper slip with a sentence, do their best to memorize it and then run back to their team-mate and dictate what was written on the paper slip, while the other student writes it down. If the student does not remember the whole sentence, they run back and check it until the sentence is fully written down. Then the students will swap places and repeat the process by taking turns until they have all the sentences written on their paper. Then they put the sentences in the correct order, check their spelling and present their work to the teacher. The teacher can deduct points for errors.

# Spot the Liar

Student interaction	In groups of 3-5
Time (in minutes)	20-25
Skill(s) in focus	Storytelling, gestures, mimicry
Preparation	-

## Instructions

The game is played in 2 – 3 groups, depending on the class size (3-5 students in one group). Each group gets at least five minutes of preparation time to think about the stories they are going to tell individually and decide who the liar is in their group. The stories can be about something that happened to them yesterday, a childhood memory, a funny happening from last week, etc. Everyone is going to tell a story, but one of the students in the group is going to tell a story that did not really happen. Then they take turns in telling stories to each other. The students in the first group tell their stories and other groups can ask 2-3 questions from the storytellers. After the students in the first group finish, other groups make their unanimous decision about who the liar is. The group who guesses correctly gets a point. Then it is the other groups turn to tell their stories. The game finishes when each student has told a story and every group has guessed.

# Which one would you choose and why?

Student interaction	In pairs
Time (in minutes)	10-15
Skill(s) in focus	Asking questions, giving reasons
Preparation	Prepare questions on paper slips
Instructions	

In this game, students are asked to choose between two concepts and explain why they chose so. Before the lesson, the teacher prepares slips of paper that have questions with two options on them (Example 2).

Each student gets a piece of paper with a question and is asked to guess how their classmates might have chosen. Which answer is more popular among classmates? Then they stand up and find a partner. They ask the questions from each other and answer them with an explanation why they chose so. They mark down on the same paper slip which option was chosen by the other student (this could be done with an answerer's name or just a tick to the chosen side). The explanations should be remembered. Then the students continue the task with another student, until they have talked with everyone in the class.

After everyone has answered to everyone's questions, short conclusions about which answer was more popular and why are made. Students shortly present their conclusions to the class along with their own opinion about the topic and if they were right when guessing the result in the beginning.

Example 2. Possible questions to use (should be printed on a wider paper slip)

Would you rather be in jail for a year or lose a year off your life?
Would you rather be an average person in the present or a king of a large country 2500 years ago?
Would you rather travel the world for a year on a shoestring budget or stay in only one country for a year but live in luxury?
Would you rather be able to teleport anywhere or be able to read minds?
Would you rather be lost in a bad part of town or lost in the forest?
Would you rather have 3 feet or 3 hands?
Would you rather read the book or watch the movie?
Would you rather hibernate every winter or be nocturnal?
Would you rather have 6 failed marriages or never get married?
Would you rather wake up in the morning as a dog or as a cat?
Would you rather be death, blind or mute?
Would you rather be an unknown superhero or a famous villain?
Would you rather share your house with a family of rats, or live with your parents forever?



# Interviewing your classmates

Student interaction	Individually
Time (in minutes)	20-30
Skill(s) in focus	Asking questions, memorizing information
Preparation	Prepare paper slips for each student
Instructions	

Each student gets to come to the front of the classroom while other students and the teacher gets to ask one question about them. For example: “Where were you born? What are your hobbies? What is your favourite book and why? etc.”

While students are asking questions and one student in front of the class is answering, the teacher quickly takes notes about each student, marking down at least one specific thing about each student. After every student has been in front of the classroom, the teacher gives every student a slip of paper and conducts a small quiz about their classmates, based on the notes that he/she wrote down during the interviews. For example, “Whose favourite colour is purple? Who has three cats at home? Who Mike wants to become?” There should be at least one question about every student. The answer sheets are then collected by teacher and evaluated, or peer reviewed, and correct answers discussed. Students with the highest score should be noted.

# Electing the Class President

Student interaction	Individually
Time (in minutes)	45 - 60
Skill(s) in focus	Asking questions, expressing your opinion, debating
Preparation	-
Instructions	

This is an adaptation of a speed-dating style of speaking task. In this game students first need to think about the qualities of a class president and write down three questions they want to ask a class president candidate. The class is divided into two equal groups (if the number is uneven, the teacher needs to step in). The first group sits down and organizes a seat for the candidates on the other side of the table, so that they can sit on opposite sides of the table, but at the same time rather close to be able to hear each other. The students standing are the first group of possible candidates for the position of class president. They all should want the position and are advised to present themselves in the best possible way.

Then the mingling starts, every student standing sits on one of the opposing chairs and answers the three questions by the classmate. The interviewer should take notes about their answers. If they finish answering the questions, the candidates stand up and sit to the next available chair, visiting all the interviewers.

If each candidate has visited each interviewer, the interviewers pass a verdict about who is the most suitable candidate in their opinion to be the class president. It should be done as a secret poll, so that everyone feels safe to say their real opinion. The votes are then quickly counted, and the winner is the student who gets the most votes. However, he/she won only in the first group. Now the roles are reversed and those who were previously sitting and interviewing, now become the candidates and stand up. If the other half of the class has finished their interviews and a verdict has been made by the interviewers, the two winners are both

congratulated for their good effort and the game could be finished, or as a follow up the two class presidents can have a debate over some of the most interesting topics for the class and one winner is elected as a result.

# The Important Questions game

Student interaction    In groups of 4-6 / whole class

Time (in minutes)    20-30

Skill(s) in focus    Reasoning, deliberating

Preparation    Prepare and print a set of question cards

## Instructions

For this game students can be divided into groups of 4-6, or in case of smaller study group this game can also be carried out in a circle. For each group there is a set of question cards (Example 3).

The group chooses the first judge. The judge takes one question from the pile and reads it out loud. The others have to come up with a good answer and add an explanation (could be done clockwise or in mixed up order to give more time to think about the answer to those who need it). If everyone has answered (except the judge), the judge gives the paper slip to the best answer given, according to his/her own opinion. No arguments should arise and personal opinions should be valued. Answers to the same question can be the same in the group, but the explanations should differ.

Then the pile with questions is passed on to the next player and he/she is the next judge to ask a question. If the time is up, divided question cards are counted by the teacher and winners are those, who have more question cards in their hands.

Example 3. A set of question cards

What everyone should do at least once in their life?	What is the best superpower to have?	What is the most important thing parents should teach their children?
Which animal is the best for nature?	Which plant is the best for mankind?	Who was the greatest person who ever lived?
Who is the greatest Estonian? (Both dead and living)	Which invention should have never been invented?	What is the biggest problem in today's society?
What is the most important profession in the world?	What is the most beautiful word in English?	What is the healthiest food?
What makes teacher's profession difficult?	What makes Estonia special?	What is the most important subject in school?

# Family Fortunes

Student interaction    In two groups

Time (in minutes)    30 - 45

Skill(s) in focus    Vocabulary

Preparation    Prepare and print a set of cards / buy a set of cards

Instructions

The game is easy to implement if the teacher has acquired a printed set of cards sold for this game. The cards can also be written by students as a pre-assignment (Example 4). The teacher can give the task as homework for students to make up two questions and conduct a poll among 20 people (classmates, schoolmates, family). The questions and answers are then collected by the teacher and formed into a set of cards (once the effort is made you can use these cards for several years).

When the pack of cards is ready, students are divided into two teams. The teacher is the game host. The teacher picks the first question card, reads it aloud to the first team guessing. The first player answers (no discussion allowed), the teacher gives points for the answer if it is mentioned on the card and if not, this is counted as the first false answer. Points and false answers are marked to the blackboard. In case the team gives three wrong answers, their turn is over, and the other team can answer. Now the other team can discuss and come up with an answer that they think is the most popular among the answerers. If they guess correctly and their answer is on the card, they get all the points previously collected by the first team and the number of points for their own correct answer is also added. If their answer is not correct the points collected by the first team are given back to them.

Now the next question card is taken from the pack and teacher reads it to the second team. The game can be continued according to the time available.

The last round is optional. The teacher gives everyone a piece of paper and reads five questions aloud. Every student now writes their five answers down on the paper. Then the points are read aloud for the most popular answers and team adds the medium number of points collected by the players in their team to their final score.

Example 4. Question cards (the numbers given after the answers mark the amount of people who answered so and at the same time it is the number of points given for correctly guessing this answer.)

<p>Name a dessert?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ice-cream 10</li> <li>2. Cake 4</li> <li>3. Candies 2</li> <li>4. Cookies 2</li> <li>5. Fruits 2</li> </ol>	<p>Name something people do right after a sneeze?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Say excuse me 8</li> <li>2. Blow their nose 5</li> <li>3. Say bless you 3</li> <li>4. Sniff 2</li> <li>5. Get a tissue 2</li> </ol>
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## **Appendix 2 - Recommendations for adaptations**

### **What do we have in common?**

This game is useful, besides good conversation practice, in increasing students' knowledge of each other and enhancing group feeling and solidarity among students. Therefore, it also succeeds in lowering the anxiety caused by classmates.

Follow up activities might include: the groups present their similarities and differences as a short presentation and put the worksheets on the wall; students pick one thing that makes them different from other students in the group and one thing that unites all three of them; students gather around in a circle and find one thing that is common with the student on his/her right hand and one thing that is common with the student on the left.

### **Speak, listen and ask**

It is important to emphasize the bilateralism of conversations. The teacher should remind students to ask questions about the things that their partner told them about.

After the teacher has done the game for a several times, students start to pay more attention to the details and start asking each other questions during the conversation phase.

The teacher can give points each time the student knows the answer to his/her question. When this game is repeated several times, speaking partners should be changed. Long-term score table of points could also be implemented by the teacher. In the end of the study term the challenge can be concluded with noting the student who has the best conversation skills and pays the most attention to their speaking partner.



### **Blackboard guessing game**

This game can be very educational and entertaining. It requires minimal preparation time and resources – only a blackboard and something to write with. The seats should be swapped after each round because it is much easier for the first student to explain than it is for the last one in the semicircle. In case of a larger study group, or when rearranging the classroom is problematic, other students can also sit in their seats and only the one guessing the word, comes to the blackboard.

### **Post-it Stickers**

In case of a larger study group, it might be a good idea to divide students into groups so that they will not have to wait for their turn for too long. The teacher can help students to memorize the characteristics that they have already found out with previous questions and give hints if necessary. The first players to have successfully guessed their word can have another word written by the teacher or can take over the role of an answerer. The teacher could also join the game and let someone give her a word or a name to guess. Having students to come up with the words or names for each other is also an option, but the teacher should always monitor the suitability of the chosen names or vocabulary items

### **I have never game**

It is important for the teacher to join in, because the role of a teacher should be more about guiding and inspiring than supervising and monitoring. Having fun together with students is important to develop the positive relationship with students to reduce anxiety.

It is suggested, especially if there are weaker students in the group, to translate or explain some of the words said, and to have a list of irregular verbs projected on the screen or printed out on papers for the students to check, if necessary.

### **If I won million euros**

Even though the game is played individually, everyone usually participates and tries to guess the right answer. Students can test their knowledge of each other and practise “poker face” while their answers are being read aloud.

If the grammar written on the paper slips is incorrect, students usually notice it and make corrections aloud, but if not, the teacher can also draw some attention to it, while the sentences are being read aloud.

### **Distraction challenge**

The topics for students to speak about can be written to the blackboard during preparation, asking students to name the most engaging discussion topics. Some examples of questions that can be asked about this topic can be added to make the game easier.

After the game, frontal discussion concluding the game should follow. Students can share their experiences and thoughts about the importance of eye-contact, effective conversation strategies and engaging questions.

### **Pronounce and go!**

This is a relatively easy but useful game to practice correct pronunciation and the ability to speak aloud. It is especially useful to shy students who sometimes seem to be unable to speak up.

In case of larger study group (more than 15 students) four groups should be formed so that the students waiting for their turn would not be bored. The Groups A and B can challenge Groups C and D to see who grows the distance faster. But in that case, one teacher is not enough and there needs to be another person (advanced student or assistant) to monitor the other two groups.

The game should end with general positive feedback and suggestions for using that experience in the classroom speaking tasks and in general for public speaking.

### **Running Dictation**

From time to time, it is beneficial to get students actively moving while studying English, especially when it is obvious that they have been sitting throughout the school day and are exhausted from it. To encourage the active running, it is possible for this game to promise the winners a prize of some kind (something small, apples or sweets), while keeping in mind that the competitive moment is appreciated by some students, but not by all.

The game could be adapted to revise current vocabulary or grammar topics. For example, the sentences on the paper slips could be written in the direct speech and to be written down in the reported speech by students.

### **Spot the liar**

This is an engaging game that makes even shy students try their best, because they want to fool other students. The most enjoyable moment in this game is observing students how closely they listen to each other's stories. Those who miss a word or two want to know the meanings of every detail and usually ask their group-mate or the teacher to explain. Storytellers tend to bring out their most shocking or bravest memories. Something that the others wouldn't believe. So, in addition to being an effective speaking task, it is also an excellent listening exercise. Students develop their skills, get to know each other more and get to challenge each other. In case of a smaller study group (3-6 students) the game could be played against the teacher, so that the teacher needs to guess who the liar is.

### **Which one would you choose and why?**

As a follow up, the teacher can hand out empty slips of paper and ask students to write their own questions that they can ask from other students. Another way to conclude the game is a whole class discussion concerning the question: “What did you learn about your classmates?”

### **Interviewing your classmates**

This is an effective task to practice listening, speaking and being in the centre of attention. In case of having many shy students in the study group, the teacher should allow answering from the seats. Going in the front of the classroom might be a very anxiety inducing situation.

All students get to experience the tension of being in the centre of attention, but also to enjoy their classmates’ interest in them and genuine questions. The teacher should set an example and be the first one in the centre of attention answering questions. Also, it is the teacher’s role to ask interesting questions from the students, making also other students wonder about each other’s childhood, hobbies, likes and dislikes.

### **Electing the class president**

The game involves all students and gives a meaning and an outcome to their speaking skills. Some students might want to choose to be a different character or have a funny accent. This is certainly allowed if it makes them feel more comfortable in this task. Students need to use English and they also have to want the position of a class president. With 12 students the game without the debate takes approximately 45 minutes. In case of smaller classes, the number of questions could be larger. The introduction of thematic vocabulary or example videos/dialogues can be used as a warm-up before the game.

The game can be changed to electing the friend of the year or to practising job interviews, where half of the class is looking for a worker for a different job positions and the students standing are the job seekers applying for the different job offerings. In the end the student who was hired for the most positions is the winner.

### **The important questions game**

Students are given relatively few chances to contemplate about the profound topics today, so this game presents them with an opportunity to do so. It might happen that when students are very engaged in the topic and eager to present their unique thoughts about the topic, they forget to worry about making mistakes.

If the teacher wishes to monitor the game better, the game should be carried out in one big circle, with the teacher also answering the questions. However, it is advisable to keep evaluation and error correction to minimum.

### **Family fortunes**

This is a popular TV-show adaptation for the language classroom. The game encourages teamwork and is especially useful for revising vocabulary and practising giving opinions. The teacher can always ask for clarifications and explanations to the answers given. Students usually encounter vocabulary items that they have already learned, but just cannot remember them. In that case, teacher can always assist with recalling words.

## Appendix 3 - Questionnaire 1

Dear Respondent,

I am a student at the University of Tartu, and I am doing a research to find out how can teachers help students to improve their English-speaking skills.

Please answer some questions that help me to get some information about it.

1. Sex
  - Male
  - Female
2. Age
3. How many years have you been learning English at school?
4. How many years have you been learning at a Waldorf school?
5. What is your weakest sub-skill?
  - Writing
  - Reading
  - Speaking
  - Listening
6. On a scale from 1 to 5 please mark how good English speaker are you in your own opinion? With number 1 meaning that you cannot speak any English at all and 5 meaning that you speak perfect English in every situation.
 

1	2	3	4	5
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-top: 5px;"/>				
7. On a scale from 1 to 5 please mark how motivated you are to become better at speaking English. With number 1 meaning that you do not care about it at all and number 5 meaning that you really want to work on becoming better English speaker.
 

1	2	3	4	5
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-top: 5px;"/>				
8. On a scale from 1 to 5 please mark how much anxiety or fear do you experience in English speaking class. With number 1 meaning that you feel relaxed if you have to speak in English classroom and number 5 meaning that you are very scared of it and would not rather speak at all.
 

1	2	3	4	5
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-top: 5px;"/>				

## 9. State your opinion on Likert scale about the argument given

1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither or Not sure	Agree	Strongly Agree	
I am never afraid to speak in English in the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
I am constantly improving my English-speaking skill.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy meeting foreigners because I can practise my English with them.	1	2	3	4	5
English classes provide enough opportunities to speak English.	1	2	3	4	5
I believe I am a good English speaker.	1	2	3	4	5
I am afraid of my classmates’ reaction, when I speak in classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
I am afraid of negative feedback from my teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
I can tell a story in English.	1	2	3	4	5
Making mistakes is a natural part of the learning process.	1	2	3	4	5
I mostly learn English outside of the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
Even if the speaking task is difficult and I don’t have the required vocabulary, I can find the strategy to get the message across.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy doing group assignments in English class.	1	2	3	4	5
All students should have a course book in English classes.	1	2	3	4	5
Students should get to choose the topics they want to discuss in the English classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
Watching TV has improved my English-speaking skill.	1	2	3	4	5
I can have a conversation in English.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel uncomfortable when being in the centre of attention.	1	2	3	4	5
I don’t like group assignments in English lessons.	1	2	3	4	5
I am going to do very well on the National speaking test of English.	1	2	3	4	5
I speak English only if I know that the sentence, I am going to say is correct.	1	2	3	4	5
I have avoided English classes because they are too difficult for me.	1	2	3	4	5
If I am unfamiliar with the topic, I spend more time on it at home.	1	2	3	4	5
I usually experience palpitation and sweating in my English-speaking class.	1	2	3	4	5

## Appendix 4 - Questionnaire 2

### Questionnaire about games in English classes

Second part of questions for the Master Thesis

*\* Obligatory*

1. Gender

*Mark only one.*

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

2. Age

---

3. On a scale from 1 to 5 please mark how much anxiety or fear do you experience in English speaking class. \*

*Mark one.*

1      2      3      4      5

you feel relaxed if you have to speak in English classroom   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   you are very scared of it and would not rather speak at all

---

4. On a scale from 1 to 5 please mark how good English speaker are you in your own opinion? \*

*Mark only one.*

1      2      3      4      5

you cannot speak any English at all   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   you speak perfect English in every situation

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5. Please think about all the English lessons you had since September and tick two most important aspects you gained from these English lessons. \*

*Mark all that apply.*

- ☐ Having fun
- ☐ Getting to know your classmates
- ☐ Practising English speaking skill
- ☐ Learning new vocabulary
- ☐ Lowering my speaking anxiety
- ☐ Learning grammar
- ☐ Other .....

6. Do you agree that games should be part of learning English in secondary education? \*

*Mark only one.*

1      2      3      4      5

Strongly disagree   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   Strongly agree

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7. Why do you think so? \*

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8. What has been your favourite aspect about playing games in English lessons? \*

*Mark only one.*

- ☐ Having fun
- ☐ Getting to know your classmates
- ☐ Learning new words and grammar
- ☐ Speaking without feeling anxious
- ☐ Moving around during the lesson
- ☐ Other

9. If you chose "Other" in previous question, please specify your answer.

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10. What has been your favourite game from English lessons and why? \*

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11. What has been your least favourite game from English lessons and why? \*

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## RESÜMEE

TARTU ÜLIKOOL

ANGLISTIKA OSAKOND

Kadri Kass

Using Games to Develop Speaking Skills in Upper-Secondary Education

Mängude kasutamine suulise osaoskuse arendamiseks gümnaasiumis,

Magistritöö

2020

Lehekülgede arv: 75

Annotatsioon:

Antud magistritöö eesmärk oli koguda informatsiooni takistustest, mida õpilased kogevad inglise keele suulise osaoskuse arendamisel ning uurida keeleõppemängude mõju neile takistustele gümnaasiumi inglise keele tundides. Uurimistöö käigus koostati mängude kogumik, mis koosneb 15-st keeleõppemängust, mis on sobilikud kasutamiseks gümnaasiumiõpilastega ning mängude kasumlikkust testiti 14 gümnaasiumiõpilasega.

Uurimisküsimused, mis antud eesmärgiks püstitati olid järgmised: Millised raskused ilmnevad õpilastel inglise keele suulise osaoskuse arendamisel? Milline mängude aspekt on valimi arvates neile kõige kasulikum ning milliseid mängu nad eelistavad?

Loetud uurimuste põhjal võib väita, et ärevus keeletundides põhjustab õpilastele kõige enam probleeme. Selle leevendamiseks soovitati õpetajapoolset toetavat ja positiivset suhtumist, hindamise olulisuse ja sageduse vähendamist ning püüet vältida häbistamist kaasõpilaste poolt. Üks võimalus nende soovitude rakendamiseks on keeleõppemängude kasutuselevõtt tundides. Uuringute põhjal võib väita, et mängude kasutamine tundides mitte ainult ei vähenda õpilaste ärevust, vaid ka tõstab nende motivatsiooni, arendab intelligentsust

ja loovust ning arendab koostöövõimet.

Antud uurimus viidi läbi Viljandi Vaba Waldorfkooli gümnaasiumiastme 14 õpilasega, kes moodustasid ühe liitklassi ning uuringu alguses kuulusid vanusevahemikku 16 – 19 aastat. Õpilased täitsid õppeaasta alguses ühe küsimustiku ning teise sama õppeaasta kevadel peale iganädalast keeleõppemängude kasutamist inglise keele tundides.

Küsitluste käigus leiti, sarnaselt loetud uuringutele, et ärevus on üks suurimaid probleeme inglise keele suulise osaoskuse arendamisel. Uuritud õpilaste jaoks oli ärevuse põhjustajaks pigem kartus kaasõpilaste poolse negatiivse tagasiside eest, ning õpetaja reageeringut seostati ärevusega vähem.

Keeleõppemängude üheks kõige positiivsemaks küljeks nimetati uuritud õpilaste poolt sõnavara arendamist. Samuti võib õpilaste vastuste põhjal väita, et erinevate isiksustega õpilased said mängudest erinevat kasu. Mänge loeti ka vajalikuks, sest need tõstsid õpimotivatsiooni, vähendasid ärevust, õpetasid grammatikat ning loids võimaluse inglise keele suulise osaoskuse harjutamiseks ning oma klassikaaslaste tundmaõppimiseks.

Proovides leida vastust küsimusele: milliseid mänge õpilased eelistavad? ühtset vastust ei leitud. Õpilased eelistavad erinevaid mänge ning seetõttu peaks kasutatavad keeleõppemängud olema väga mitmekülgsed, et kõik õpilased oleksid kaasatud sobivaimal viisil. Üldiselt eelistati mänge, mis loovad võimaluse koostööks ning oma mõtlemisvõime arendamiseks, mis on lõbusad ning aitavad oma klassikaaslaste paremini tundma õppida.

Märksõnad:

Inglise keel ja keeleõpe, keeleõppemängud, suuline osaoskus, ärevus, kommunikatiivne meetod, waldorfpedagoogika

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Kadri Kass

[13.05.2020]

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[Autori allkiri]

[Kadri Kass]

[19.05.2020]

**Lõputöö on lubatud kaitsmisele.**

[Juhendaja allkiri]

[Liina Tammekänd]

[19.05.2020]